

**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF  
GOD? AN INQUIRY INTO  
THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY  
SCRIPTURE ON THIS QUESTION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649398485

Who are the children of God? An inquiry into the doctrine of holy Scripture on this question by  
Horace Noel

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**HORACE NOEL**

**WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF  
GOD? AN INQUIRY INTO  
THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY  
SCRIPTURE ON THIS QUESTION**



# Who are the Children of God?

AN INQUIRY INTO THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY  
SCRIPTURE ON THIS QUESTION.

# Who are the Children of God?

AN INQUIRY INTO THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY  
SCRIPTURE ON THIS QUESTION.

BY

HORACE NOEL, M.A.

ROMANS viii. 14.

GALATIANS iii. 26.

I JOHN iii. 10.



LONDON

WILLIAM MACINTOSH,

24, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1874.

*Price One Shilling.*

141. m. 410



Fig. 1.

# WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD?

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INQUIRY.

To the question, Who are the children of God? three different answers are given by the three great schools of theology into which Christendom is divided, and which, to avoid offence, I may denominate by names which they themselves would own—the Broad Church, the Catholic, and the Evangelical.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A certain system of doctrines being associated with a great love for the name of "Catholic," that term may serve as sufficiently indicative of those who hold them. But the word is very vague, and little worth contending for. The Church of Christ is "Catholic" as consisting of *all* those who love Christ and keep his commandments (Eph. i. 22, 23; v. 22—23), and thus distinguished from local churches (*e.g.* the seven churches



If we put this inquiry to a Broad Church teacher he will tell us that the sons of God are all mankind.

The "Catholic" will deny this, and say, "Those that have been duly baptized and have not lost their baptismal grace."<sup>2</sup>

The "Evangelical" differs from both and replies, "Those only whose hearts have been changed by the Holy Ghost dwelling within them."<sup>3</sup>

It is evident how widely these answers disagree, and how different must be the consequences to which they lead. Each answer is not merely characteristic of the school from which it proceeds, but is also closely connected with the other peculiar doctrines of that school. We may compare this inquiry, therefore,

of Asia). But the Catholicity of Rome excludes the greater part by far of the true Church of Christ, and includes multitudes who have no place in it. The Catholicity of the Anglo-Catholic is more comprehensive: but it is a Catholicity so divided by anathemas and excommunications, that the divisions of Evangelical Protestantism are trifling in comparison.

<sup>2</sup> Those who will agree in this answer will not-always agree as to who are "duly" baptized. The Church of Rome is less *sacerdotal* in her doctrine on this point than some Anglicans; acknowledging the validity of baptism by laymen; nay more, by heretics and schismatics. But on this subject I need not enter.

<sup>3</sup> There are those who belong to the "Evangelical" School, yet would not give precisely this answer. But this is the answer which will be given by those who follow out "Evangelical" principles logically and consistently.

to a point from which three highways diverge, leading in very different directions, and where every prudent traveller will make sure of the road before he goes further. No intelligent and thoughtful person can consider it a trifling question whether a man's Christianity is that of Frederic Maurice, of Nicholas Wiseman, or of John Bunyan. And although multitudes of persons may adopt a false principle, without pursuing it into all its consequences, yet too often the contrary is the case; and the innumerable instances of extreme departures from the truth, which we have witnessed of late years, warn us loudly to beware of the first steps in the path of error. To no matter does the rule, "*Principiis obsta,*" apply more forcibly than to this.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### THE NECESSITY OF AN APPEAL TO HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Amidst the plentiful disagreements of faith and practice to be found amongst professed Christians, it appears to have been ordained by God's merciful Providence that they should agree with considerable unanimity on one point—namely, the Divine authority of Holy Scripture. They agree more especially in regarding the writings of the New Testament as a genuine record of the teaching of our Lord and His inspired apostles. This one fact (were there no other

reason) points to the Scripture as the proper standard of appeal by which all controversies among Christians ought to be tried. And, being such, we might expect to find in it a clear and unequivocal answer to all questions of such importance as that now before us. This, as it appears to me, is actually the case. Had men been guided simply by the authority of Scripture in inquiring to whom the title of God's children belongs, I believe that very little difference of opinion would ever have existed on this point.

\* It may seem, however, to some of my readers that the question can easily be settled without any reference to Scripture. They will perhaps argue that, God being the Author of our existence, the Benefactor on whose daily bounties we live, and (still more) the great Spirit in whose likeness our spirits are more or less formed, these facts are sufficient warrant for calling Him our Father and ourselves His children.

But a little reflection may show us that the question cannot be decided in this offhand answer. No person of a reverent mind would call the dumb animals God's children; yet, God is their Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor, as well as ours. If it be pleaded that as rational beings we possess a likeness to God which they do not, it may be replied on the other hand that a degree of intelligence unquestionably belongs to the brutes, and that the understanding of a dog is in some measure superior to that of a child a month old.

But does not man's moral nature place him in such an elevation as to entitle him to call God his Father? Doubtless, the power of discerning moral good and evil is a very important point of resemblance to Him